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STATEMENT BY SENATOR BOXER ON CVPIA REFORM JUNE 21, 1995

Today several members of the House announced that they will propose amendments to the 1992 Central Valley Project Improvement Act (CVPIA).

After years of hearings and legislative debate, the CVPIA was passed in 1992 with overwhelming support, and signed into law by President Bush. CVPIA provided landmark reforms to California's water system that will help stabilize our fish and wildlife resources and provide greater reliability to our urban areas. Moreover, it allows farmers to make a profit selling federally developed water resources, ensures long term contract renewals, and provides that most of the water used for environmental purposes must be purchased by the government through an innovative Restoration Fund.

Last December an historic accord was reached to protect the San Francisco Bay-Delta Estuary. This accord resulted from unprecedented consensus among California's urban, agricultural and environmental interests as well as state and federal government. The CVPIA was an essential component of the consensus package. This new effort to amend the CVPIA could severely threaten the success of the Bay/Delta accords.

I am aware of the strong sentiments expressed by the agricultural community, urban water users and others, and their concerns are important and should be weighed carefully. I believe that suggestions on how to improve the CVPIA must first exhaust all possible administrative solutions. The pursuit of major legislative changes to the CVPIA will only divert energy away from the Bay/Delta process and its tremendous potential for consensus-based success.